DEPARTMENT OF STATE

BRIEFING PAPER

SECRET

INDO-US NUCLEAR RELATIONS

After a bruising battle on the Hill last September, the Carter Administration approved two additional shipments of fuel for India's Tarapur power reactor. This action merely postponed a decision on the future of our nuclear cooperation with India. In our view, the legal complications and political costs substantially exceed the benefits of attempting to continue the nuclear relationship. (We understand Senator Percy shares this view.) We have reason to believe that the Indian government would also prefer to terminate the relationship.

The Indians have moved to force an early decision on Tarapur by the new Administration since they feel that the previous Administration was inclined to string them along indefinitely. There are also good technical reasons for the Indians to seek an early decision. We need to respond to the Indians before the end of February.

We believe it is in American interests to try to negotiate an amicable termination of the relationship rather than drift into an early, unproductive confrontation. While we cannot be certain, there are indications that the Indian government too would like to arrange a disengagement in ways which do the least damage to broader Indo-US relations (Mrs. Gandhi moved very promptly after the election to establish contact with the new Administration). Nevertheless, the nuclear issue is extremely contentious and evokes strong feelings and rhetoric both in our Congress and in the Indian Parliament. To achieve an amicable disengagement it will be absolutely essential to conduct discussions without publicity.

We are preparing an action memo to the Secretary, in conjunction with OES, which will spell out how we might best move toward disengagement. Very briefly, we will need:

1. A prompt policy decision in principle to terminate our nuclear supply relationship with India;

SECRET

GDS 1/17/86

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CIC/MR
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2. Approval for quiet consultations with Senator Percy;

3. Authorization before the end of February to probe Indian interest in discussions leading to disengagement and to arrange the modalities to ensure confidentiality;

4. Preparation of a detailed legal, technical and political negotiating position.

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INDO-US NUCLEAR RELATIONS

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Cleared:NEA:JACoon

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, U.S.
WASHINGTON, D. C.

8006207

3 March, 19 80

Office of Congressional
Liaison
THE WHITE HOUSE

The attached communication is submitted for your consideration, and to ask that the request made therein be complied with, if possible.

If you will advise me of your action in this matter and have the letter returned to me with your reply, I will appreciate it.

Ack FM/State
CONGRESSIONAL
LIAISON

Very truly yours,

Larry Winn, Jr. M.C.

Third/Kansas District.
LW:vla

cc:
Senators Dole and Kassebaum
Rep. Winn
Senators Jackson, Moynihan, and Kennedy
Ms. Pat Derian

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20 February,

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Sincerely

Carl H. Lande
Professor

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